

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PARIS 31740 121920Z

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 IO-14 NEA-10 AID-20 EB-11 NIC-01

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5407

USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION USNATO

USINT CAIRO

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

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AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMEMBASSY RABAT

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AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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AMEMBASSY TUNIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 31740

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, FR, XF, XG

SUBJECT: FRENCH VIEWS ON EUROPEAN-ARAB RELATIONS

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PAGE 02 PARIS 31740 121920Z

SUMMARY: FRENCH ARE PROPOSING TO EC PARTNERS AND ARABS MEETING TO DISCUSS ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION. SUCH MEETING WOULD BE DESIGNED TO STRESS BOTH EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY IN FACE OF ARAB THREATS AND BASIC INTERDEPENDENCE OF EUROPEAN AND ARAB STATES. FONMIN JOBERT PLANS TO VISIT MIDDLE EAST IN EARLY 1974. WHILE SHOWING SLIGHTLY INCREASED FLEXIBILITY ON TIMING, QUAI OFFICIAL CONTINUES TO STRESS IMPORTANCE OF INTERNATIONAL GUARANTEES TO ANY MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT. END SUMMARY.

1. DURING DISCUSSION DECEMBER 11 WITH QUAI DIRECTOR FOR MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA DE COMMINES, EMBOFFS ASKED WHAT FONMIN JOBERT HAD IN MIND WHEN HE REFERRED ELIPTICALLY IN HIS NOVEMBER 30 SPEECH IN THE FRENCH SENATE TO A MEETING (RENCONTRE) BETWEEN THE STATES OF THE MIDDLE EAST AND EUROPE. DE COMMINES SAID JOBERT WAS SENDING UP A TRIAL BALLOON TO GET EUROPEAN (ESSENTIALLY EC) AND ARAB REACTION TO THE IDEA OF HOLDING A MEETING. FRANCE CONCEIVED OF THE ENCOUNTER AS BEING DEVOTED TO QUESTIONS OF ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION BETWEEN EUROPE AND THE ARAB STATES AND NOT TO POLITICAL MATTERS. IT MIGHT BE A MEANS BY WHICH THE ECONOMIC INTERDEPENDENCE BETWEEN EUROPE AND THE ARAB STATES COULD BE BROUGHT HOME TO THE LATTER. IT ALSO WOULD BE A MORE EFFECTIVE WAY TO GAIN ACCEPTANCE BY THE ARABS FOR THE FACT OF EUROPEAN COOPERATION IN FACE OF THE TOTAL ARAB OIL BOYCOTT OF THE NETHERLANDS THAN WOULD BE THE RINGING DECLARATION OF COMMUNITY SOLIDARITY THAT THE DUTCH DESIRE.

2. DE COMMINES INDICATED THAT ALGERIA, LIBYA AND TUNISIA AND, TO A LESSER EXTENT, MOROCCO HAD GIVEN SUPPORT FOR THE IDEA. THE OTHER ARAB STATES AND EC MEMBERS HAD YET TO BE HEARD FROM. FRANCE INTENDS TO RAISE THE MATTER AT THE COPENHAGEN EC MEETINGS. OTHER POTENTIALLY INTERESTED STATES LIKE GREECE AND TURKEY MIGHT EVENTUALLY BE INCLUDED AMONG THE EUROPEAN PARTICIPANTS, HE SAID.

3. DE COMMINES CONFIRMED REPORTS THAT JOBERT PROBABLY WOULD VISIT A NUMBER OF NEAR EASTERN COUNTRIES DURING THE FIRST QUARTER OF 1974. SUCH A TRIP BY THE FRENCH FONMIN HAD BEEN PLANNED FOR A LONG TIME BUT EVENTS THAT HAD TAKEN PLACE IN THE CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 PARIS 31740 121920Z

AREA HAD CAUSED SEVERAL POSTPONEMENTS. DE COMMINES DID NOT NAME THE COUNTRIES TO BE VISITED BUT SAID ISRAEL WOULD NOT BE ON THE ITINERARY FOR JOBERT'S FIRST TRIP TO THE REGION.

4. WHEN ASKED FOR HIS CURRENT VIEWS ON THE GENEVA PEACE TALKS, DE COMMINES EXPRESSED LESS PESSIMISM THAN PREVIOUSLY. HE THOUGHT MEANINGFUL NEGOTIATIONS WERE UNLIKELY BEFORE THE ISRAELI ELECTIONS BUT WENT SO FAR AS TO SAY THERE EXISTS THE

POSSIBILITY, HOWEVER SLIGHT, THAT SOME MOVEMENT ON THE SEPARATION OF TROOPS MIGHT BE ACCOMPLISHED IN DECEMBER. WHILE ADMITTING THE POSSIBLE UTILITY OF THE GENEVA MEETING AS A FIRST STEP, HE ONCE AGAIN STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE TO ANY EFFECTIVE SETTLEMENT OF INTERNATIONAL GUARANTEES, THROUGH THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL OR ITS PERMANENT MEMBERS.

5. COMMENT: JOBERT'S IDEA OF AN EC-ARAB MEETING IS QUITE DIFFERENT FROM PREVIOUS PROPOSALS FOR A MEDITERRANEAN SECURITY CONFERENCE. IT HAS A REMARKABLE SIMILARITY TO TUNISIAN VIEWS AS EXPRESSED TO ITALIANS (ROME 13733). JOBERT APPARENTLY THINKS THAT, IN THE ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL FIELDS, THE EC NINE COULD MAKE THE ARABS AN OFFER THEY COULD NOT OVERLOOK. THIS WOULD REVERSE THE CURRENT SITUATION OF EUROPE BEING ESSENTIALLY BEHOLDEN TO THE ARABS.
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